

BALTIMORE CITY DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING
URBAN DESIGN AND ARCHITECTURE REVIEW PANEL
MEETING MINUTES

Date: January 16, 2014

Meeting No.: 177

Project: Poppleton PUD

Phase: Schematic – Phase IA

Location: Poppleton Neighborhood – West Baltimore

PRESENTATION:

Developer Dan Bythewood of La Cite' Development gave a welcome and overview of project:

- The schematic will address the panel comments from the previous UDARP meeting
- Two massing models, site context photos, master plan and design strategies will be presented.
- The architecture will transform the Westside of Baltimore.
- There are multiple project timelines. Must meet timeline for land disposition agreement.

Peter Stubb and David Dymond of Gensler presented the Master Plan.

Approved Master Plan:

- The project consists of 3 city blocks with parking lot East of Amity Street. Volumes step down as you travel north on the site
- The project will pursue the option with less neighborhood retail. It is smaller scale with self parking. Stack parking abandoned.

Phase 1A Site Plan:

- Plan consists of Block G, E/F, and H,E/F

Proposed Massing

- Simple block massing with L shape forms sitting above a podium.

Site Sections:

- H Block is 4 stories over 1 level of parking.
- E/F Block is 5 stories over 1 level of parking.
- 15 feet of retail height. Trying to find balance across site. The plan will adjust 1'-2' if the buildings change.

Planning Strategies:

- Schroeder Street is the principal street with greatest pedestrian activity. It will have retail and residential access. Amity Street will be used primarily for service access, however it also connects the site to the historic Poe House and Poe Homes. Widening of

the street is planned in future phases. Service on Amity will be aligned with existing curb cuts. Service access will be curb side and within the garage. This area will be separated from the adjacent park by a wall.

- Parking is in the middle of the building/development and is accessed from Lexington St.
- There will also be retail fronting Lexington Street.
- Larger retail space will be provided in later phase on the North end of the PUD.
- H block will have 88 units. E/F block will have 174 units. The deep residential units will face the streets. The narrower units will face the courtyards.
- The buildings are composed of an inner and outer skin. The outer skin- used primarily on facades facing the streets- creates rhythm and order. Metal panels or a similar material will make this skin appear crisp, clean and modern. . The inner skin- primarily facing the courtyards- will likely be a wood composite material to appear warmer and more playful. Cost and value to be considered.
- Amenities will be on the second level above the residential entrance on Schroeder.
- Relief at the street edge will be provided by a 3-4' recess of the building edge.
- There will be screening with vegetation.
- Solid walls will have an artful treatment-painting or sculpting.

Retail Plan

- Elevator on W. Fayette on block E/F
- Retail about 3,000 sq. ft. each. 45' depth.
- Podium drops, amenities above retail will have a loftier feel.
- On Block H retail shops will be at the corner with amenity space.
- The target is 88 retail units.

Green space:

- Schroeder Street will have on street parking. Amity will not have on-street parking.
- Activity spaces will be at grade between Block H and the northern block.
- There will be active public space at Lexington and Amity Streets.
- Dog Park will be located on Amity behind Block G parking. eExploring an artificial turf with gravel subsurface for drainage.
- Trees will be located in flow thru planters on Schroeder Street, but not on Amity Street. The sidewalk on Amity Street is less than 10', so trees will be next to the curb and there will be one type of paver. The sidewalk on Schroeder Street will be divided into different zones with different pavers.
- The parking area on Amity will have a 4' wall with trees planted in the parking area.
- Sidewalks on Amity will be 9'-16', Lexington St will have 7'-8' wide pedestrian zone, Schroeder Street will have a 7'-19' wide pedestrian zone
- There will be new sidewalks located across Amity Street and the parking lot and Dog Park.

PANEL COMMENTS:

Building and Massing

- Using dual skins to differentiate the public and private facades is exciting and powerful.
- Let changes in the material become part of the building form.

- Setbacks at the ground-level make the upper floors appear to hang in space. These masses should appear grounded.
- Retail frontage should be aligned along Schroder Street to reinforce the continuity of ground-level activity. Eliminating the setbacks will also recapture retail square footage.
- The expression of where the residential entry is not substantial enough, and should be ordered to express that it is an entrance to home. It should look more residential and not so retail in its expression.
- Reevaluate the notion of an “art wall” as means to reconcile the bareness and opacity of the service walls along Amity Street and facing the courtyard. Consider an architectural approach that has an artful expression and increases transparency and visual movement. Also, explore ways that the walls can be used to enhance the relationship between the courtyard and the Poe House.

Green Space

- Landscape architect should work with Baltimore Office of Sustainability and DPW to create complete street for the project. There is an opportunity to a more green/sustainable project through the green space design.
- Invest more money into Amity Street.
- Having and activity on the Amity Street courtyard is critical. Adding a connection from the residential core to the park may encourage greater use. The courtyard should also be fronted with ground-level building activity for passive surveillance; “eyes on the courtyard.”
- The plaza north of the H Block needs further development. It should align with the Poe Homes to reinforce this historical axis. The landscape, specifically trees, blocks the visual connection.
- Consider the parks’ purpose. They can be used to talk about Edgar Allen Poe and Baltimore, or for educational purposes.

COMMUNITY COMMENTS

- Concerned about trucks and trailers on Amity Street
- Want amenities included in the project that are available to seniors in the adjacent community.

PANEL ACTION

Continue Schematic design development and return for additional review.

Attending:

Dan Bythewood- La Cite’ Development

Peter Stubb, David Dymond, Maria Wolf, Karen Hill – Gensler

Chuck Tint - DRA

Susan William-STV

Jane Buccheri – Hollins Roundhouse

Steve Kelly, Ryan Johnson – Mahan Rykiel

Lorraine Ledbelter, Crystal Jett, Joshua Claiborne, Thomas Pearson, Rev. Ernest King – Poe
Home

Brian Greenan – Mayor’s Office

Lembit Jogi - HABC

UDARP Panel Members- Ms. Jones Allen*, Messrs. Bowden, Haresign and Burns
Planning Department-Mr. Tom Stosur, Christina Gaymon, Brent Flickinger